

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for automatically updating a shared central subscriber directory used to route subscriber messages, comprising:
  - generating an update request in response to an event that changes subscriber information in a messaging system; and
  - updating the shared central subscriber directory based on the update request.
2. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising storing the update event at an intermediate server while maintaining synchronicity between the update event and the local messaging system.
3. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said generating occurs only when information changed in the message box has corresponding information in the shared central subscriber directory.
4. A method as recited in claim 3, further comprising sending the update request from the intermediate server to a proxy client that in turn sends the update request to the shared central subscriber directory.
5. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said generating and updating is performed by a plurality of messaging systems that also access the shared central subscriber directory
6. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said generating is responsive to a change to a message box initiated by a subscriber telephone call.
7. A method for automatically synchronizing a shared central subscriber directory server with a voice messaging system, comprising:
  - generating an update request for updating the shared subscriber directory server when one of subscriber actions and administrator actions update subscriber information in the voice messaging system;
  - appending the update request to a queue managed by an update server and in a

same order as one of corresponding subscriber actions and corresponding administrator actions occur;

reading the update requests from the queue on a first-in first-out basis;

sending the update requests to the shared subscriber directory server; and

updating the shared subscriber directory server in real-time based on the update request.

8. A method as recited in claim 7, further comprising refreshing subscriber information in the update requests, after said reading and before said sending, in accordance with current corresponding subscriber information in the voice messaging system, when the update requests are one of expired and in a queue not primarily associated with the voice messaging system having the subscriber information.

9. A method as recited in claim 7, wherein said appending, reading, sending and refreshing are performed by an intermediate server managing the queue, and said generating occurs at one of an application process, an administrative utility, and a bulk data upload utility.

10. The method as recited in claim 9, wherein the bulk data upload utility generates update requests for one of ranges of message boxes in the voice messaging system, all message boxes in the voice messaging system, and ranges of message boxes in the voice messaging system.

11. A method as recited in claim 7, wherein the shared subscriber directory is accessed using one of Lightweight Directory Access Protocol X.500 protocol.

12. A method as recited in claim 7, wherein the subscriber directory resides in a remote, foreign addressing domain and is shared by messaging systems from different vendors.

13. A method as recited in claim 7, further comprising appending the update request to a queue of a secondary update server when a primary update server is unavailable.

14. A method as recited in claim 7, further comprising reading from a second update server the update requests in the queue responsive to a failure impairing the update server.

15. A method as recited in claim 7, wherein the subscriber action comprises a telephone call that updates the message box of the subscriber.

16. A method as recited in claim 7, wherein one of subscriber actions and administrator actions comprises one of creating a message box, deleting a message box, modifying a message box, suspending a message box, reinstating a message box, reinitializing a message box, and migrating a message box from a first voice messaging system to a second voice messaging system

17. A method as recited in claim 7, wherein said generating is triggered in an application corresponding to one of the subscriber action and the administrator action.

18. A method as recited in claim 17, wherein the application corresponding to one of the subscriber action and the administrator action resumes processing immediately after said generating.

19. A method as recited in claim 7, wherein said generating is responsive to a change to a message box initiated by a subscriber telephone call.

20. A method as recited in claim 7, further comprising determining whether name announcements are attributes of subscriber information that are updated on the shared directory server.

21. A method as recited in claim 20, further comprising including name announcement data with the update requests if said determining indicates that name announcement data is updated on the shared directory server, and transcoding the name announcement before sending it to the shared subscriber directory server.

22. A method for automatically synchronizing a shared subscriber directory server with a voice messaging system, comprising:

generating, responsive to a subscriber telephone call, an update request for updating the shared subscriber directory server when one of subscriber actions and administrator actions update subscriber information in the voice messaging system;

appending, the update request to a queue managed by an update server and in a same order as one of corresponding subscriber actions and corresponding administrator actions occur;

reading, with the update server, the update requests from the queue on a first-in first-out basis;

refreshing, with the update server, subscriber information in the update requests, after said reading and before said sending, in accordance with current corresponding subscriber information in the voice messaging system, when the update requests are one of expired and in a queue not primarily associated with the voice messaging system having the subscriber information;

sending the update requests from the update server to the shared subscriber directory server using Lightweight Directory Access Protocol;

updating the shared subscriber directory server in real-time based on the update request.

23. A computer readable storage controlling a computer via a data structure for automatically updating a subscriber directory used to route subscriber messages and comprising a telephone number field, a local access and transport area identifier field, a network routing address field, and a presentation address field.

24. An apparatus for automatically updating a subscriber directory used to route subscriber messages, comprising:

a control unit generating an update request in response to an event that changes subscriber information in a messaging system; and

a database comprising the subscriber directory updated by said control unit based on the update request.

25. An apparatus for automatically synchronizing a shared subscriber directory

server with a voice messaging system, comprising:

a program generating an update request for updating the shared subscriber directory server when one of subscriber actions and administrator actions update subscriber information in the voice messaging system;

update server receiving the update request and appending the update request to a queue managed by said update server in a same order as one of corresponding subscriber actions and corresponding administrator actions occur, said update server reading the update requests from the queue on a first-in first-out basis and sending the update requests to the shared subscriber directory server; and

a shared subscriber directory server updating a subscriber database in real-time based on the update request.

26. A computer readable storage controlling a computer via generating an update request responsive to a subscriber information change event, and updating a shared centralized subscriber directory used to route subscriber messages by plural message storage systems.